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# News Release

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## Corps accomplishes many projects during low water period

**BOYDTON, Virginia**—Contractors supporting the John H. Kerr Dam and Reservoir are following the old farmer's adage to "make hay while the sun shines." Seemingly undending dry, sunny weather has lowered lake levels on Kerr Lake to just above 291 feet above mean sea level, leaving marinas, swim beaches, boat ramps and other lake features exposed for the first time in months or years.

"Those conditions make it easy to carry out some chores and open the way for others that would be impossible without these dry conditions," said Terry Ramsey, Acting Operations Manager. "We are taking advantage of a bad situation by getting a lot of tasks done that would otherwise be more costly."

According to Ramsey and Ranger Eric Edwardson, contractors are using these drought-ridden times to carry out many jobs that will make Kerr Lake safer, cleaner, more accessible, and more user friendly for years to come.

"We are extending boat ramps, so that the lake will continue to be accessible at low water," Ramsey said. "This year we plan to lengthen about ten ramps." According to Edwardson, contractors have made a good beginning. Ramps are now longer at Bluestone, Rudd's Creek Day Use Area, North Bend, Longwood, and Grassy Creek. "It is much more efficient to do the work now. There's no need to build a coffer dam and pump the water away from the area. Workers can simply prepare the ground and pour concrete," Edwardson said.

Swim beaches are also more accessible for repair work. "We are able to clear the bottom of rock, glass, cans and other debris," Ramsey said. "This year we will probably not need to have divers go down to examine the bottom, because it is exposed. We are also placing new depth markers and other signage at the beaches."

Major debris and obstacles exposed by lower water can also be more easily removed. "We have taken out some old railroad track near Clarksville, Virginia that we think might date back to the construction of the lake," Edwardson said. "We have also been able to remove a sunken boat, old telephone poles, and debris from old docks."

"We are all hoping for plenty of rain," Ramsey said. "We would like to see the lake back at a higher level. We don't control Mother Nature, but we do have control our operations and maintenance program. While this dry weather lasts, we are doing all we can to make Kerr Lake a cleaner, safer, more accessible place for people to enjoy in the future."